

knowledge of the required monthly reinforcements necessary to go overseas, plus this additional 16,000 that now have to go in December, January and the following three months? I think that requires only a yes or no answer.

Mr. McNAUGHTON: The answer is that I had sufficient general information to satisfy myself in the opinions I expressed.

Mr. WHITE: And the opinion you expressed I assume is contained in this letter which I mentioned from the Prime Minister to Colonel J. L. Ralston. Will you now please tell the house what information you received since October 31, when you gave this advice to the Prime Minister, that changed your mind so that you recommended to the Prime Minister or to the war cabinet action which resulted in the order in council that has just been passed?

Mr. McNAUGHTON: I think that in the address which I was privileged to give to the house to-day I gave my reasons *in extenso*.

Mr. WHITE: Will the minister state them now very briefly?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Does my hon. friend realize that the minister was up until five this morning preparing his statement in order to give it to the house to-day, that he has been on his feet in the house here during the entire afternoon and evening, and that during the last couple of weeks he has had one of the most difficult tasks any man could possibly assume and has been giving his whole time to it? To ask him now to repeat something he has given to the house a couple of times already to-day is I think an unreasonable request. I wish to say this, and I say it in deep earnestness. All of us on this side of the house have been under very great strain, and are carrying very great responsibility. I am debating in my mind at the moment whether, after having had to sit here to-day and go through all that I have had to give attention to to-day, I shall not ask the house to allow me to wait until Monday before I address it. With the responsibility I have at the present time I have the right to take that step. I do not intend to assume the further responsibility I have in addressing the house, when I am tired out; nor, I think, would any man who has gone through what I have gone through during the past month in seeking to keep this country in unity. When hon. gentlemen speak of not having any confidence in myself I hope they will consider very carefully what alternative government they have to put in office if I resign this post within the next two weeks.

Mr. HOMUTH: Just try it.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Does the right hon. gentleman think he is indispensable to the Canadian confederation?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: No, I do not.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): If he does, he never made a greater mistake in his life. There is not any man among us who is wholly indispensable; and I venture to say that the Canadian people are to-day in a temper that—

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): You said the same thing about the New Brunswick election.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Never mind about the New Brunswick election.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): You said there would not be a Liberal elected in New Brunswick; and they swept the province.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Will the hon. member for Vancouver Centre be good enough to keep quiet? I resent being lectured by the Prime Minister as to what our duty is in the circumstances. I admit very frankly that he has gone through a very trying time, but I tell him that it is of his own making and if he had followed the command of the people of Canada as evidenced by the vote on the plebiscite this thing would have been over long ago.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): I have the floor. I have not been taking up much of the time of this session since we reconvened here. I want to tell my right hon. friend very frankly that there is a great and rising volume of public opinion in this country that will be very glad to dispense with him and with his government. I tell him very frankly that as far as I am personally concerned I have no ambitions at all, but what I would like to have in this country is a government which would be representative of all the patriotic elements in the country, that would wage total war, once and for all, and achieve victory, irrespective of party concerns. I quite agree that General McNaughton has been subject to a very severe time, especially, as has been stated by the Prime Minister, in that he is not a man who has been through such a siege or a condition as we have had to-day. As far as I am concerned, General McNaughton knows that in the days gone by I have had nothing but the friendliest feelings toward him, and I have to-night. I certainly think he has put himself in an impossible position before